



# Harbinger

SPRINGFIELD CONSERVATION NATURE CENTER

VOL. 17 NO. 6

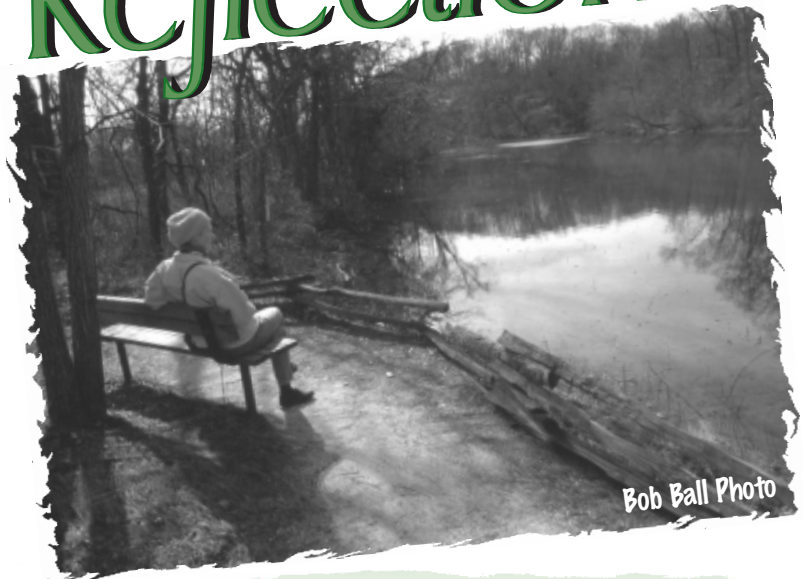
With the passing of 2003, the Springfield Conservation Nature center has reached a milestone—15 years of educating people in southwest Missouri about the forest, fish, and wildlife resources of our state. In the past 15 years the nature center has become different things to different people. To many Springfield-area educators, the nature center has become a place to bring their students for a quality educational experience in an outdoor setting. For some parents, it's a place where the whole family can spend quality time reading nature stories by the fireplace or attend an evening program. For others, it is a tranquil setting in which to enjoy a leisurely stroll after work to forget the pressures of the day.

Whatever the nature center means to you, we'd like to know about it. Whether you're a daily visitor or just an occasional program attendee, you're invited to take part in Nature Center Reflections, a photo display to help kick-off the new year. We're looking for a few good photographs that display the best that the nature center has to offer. We will accept photographs taken on the nature center property that fit into the following categories: flora, fauna, patterns in nature, landscapes, and people. All photo submissions should be at least 5x7 inches and be either matted or framed. An explanation of what is depicted should accompany the photograph. It can be as short as a title or as much as a few sentences which tell a story about your photo. These explanations will be formatted for display

alongside the photographs. Entries must be received by December 15. All appropriate photographs will be on display in the nature center lobby during January and February. Photos will be returned to their owners after the exhibition period.

So if you've ever dreamed of being a famous photographer, now's your chance. Dust off those old photos you've always admired or go out and take some new ones and bring them to the nature center. A picture is only worth a thousand words, if you share it with others.

## Nature Center Reflections



### Submission Guidelines

All photographs submitted for the photo display should meet the following criteria:

- ◆ taken on the nature center property;
- ◆ measure at least 5x7 inches and be matted or framed;
- ◆ accompanied by a narrative description;
- ◆ submitted by December 15, 2003; and
- ◆ fit one of the following categories: flora, fauna, patterns in nature, landscapes, or people.

**Photos will be displayed during January and February then returned to the photographers.**

# Chipping In . . . Larry Stuart

Now that the nature center's Halloween Happenings event is over, we can let you in on a secret that solves the mystery of one of our "Super Hero" trail characters. This year he brought the role of a Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtle to life while last year he was masked as the defender of good and evil in his role as Spiderman. The character behind these masked crusaders is Volunteer Naturalist Larry Stuart, a true nature defender and outdoor super sleuth.

When he and his family moved from Oklahoma City to Springfield in 1997, he and his kids became regular

nature center visitors. He was home-schooling his son and daughter and brought them weekly to walk the trails as part of their science curriculum. Over the next two summers he brought his kids and several of their friends for more nature discovery sessions. They were always looking for clues to unlock the secrets of nature.

During this same time, Larry was doing some investigating of his own. He discovered that he was ready for a career change and decided to get involved in conservation. He enrolled in classes at SMSU to earn his Bachelor of Science degree in Wildlife

Conservation and Management, and will graduate in May of 2004. He also knew he needed to get more experience for his resume, so he applied for our volunteer program and joined our nature defender team in 2002.

You may have seen him helping with Conservation Kids' Club and Conservation TEEN Club meetings. He has worked behind the scenes to make a short video of the statewide volunteer field trip to encourage others to get involved. He is currently working on an introductory nature center video that will be used as a teaser before some of the evening programs. This month he premieres what he hopes to be a regular nature center program entitled Nature Investigators for children ages 7 to 12 years. (See program descriptions for more details.)

Unfortunately, Larry has discovered more than nature along the nature center trails and once again he came to the rescue. His company, called Nature's Cleaners, contracts with us to remove the trash along the nature center waterways. From his own outdoor experiences, he would encourage you to investigate the trails, learn facts by attending programs, and search for clues to learn how nature works. In doing so, you will become a true nature investigator and want to thank volunteer super sleuth Larry Stuart for chipping in.

## Thank you . . .

The nature center would like to thank Lora Mayer, Travis Asher, Robin Tichenor, Arden and Haley Short, Mike King, and Mary Bird for donating various natural objects. We would also like to thank George B. Deatz for the monarch butterfly photo, Dave Berg for squirrel feeders, and Associated Grocers for suet cakes.

## The View From The Bridge

What can be accomplished in 15 years? A teenager can apply for an instruction permit to drive a car by the age of 15; a child's education could go from kindergarten through college, graduating with an Associates degree in that time frame; a 15th wedding anniversary could be celebrated with crystal; and a nature center could go from opening its doors to hosting more than 1.5 million visitors.

For Volunteer Naturalists Becky Matthews, Amy Short, Betty Johnson, Don Brink, and Debbie Good, 15 years represents a lifetime of volunteering. All 5 of these volunteers (along with hourly Naturalist Donna Legg) answered our request for volunteers during our first training session held 15 years ago. Combined, their contribution has totaled more than 11,000 hours, equal to the work of 5 permanent staff members working for 1 year. In addition, these folks have brought their talents, skills, and interests to the nature center team making it possible for us to offer a variety of programs that would be impossible to provide without their assistance. More importantly, these folks become closer than friends and are more like members of an extended family.

If you'd like to be part of this extended family, you might want to consider volunteering your time at the nature center. Again this year, we are looking for a few enthusiastic, conservation-minded people who are over the age of 18 and willing to contribute an average of 12 hours a month for a least 1 year. If you'd like to learn more about volunteer opportunities at the nature center, plan on attending an **informational meeting on Monday, November 10, from 7-8pm.**

Other citywide volunteer opportunities can be perused by attending one of the Harvest of Volunteers Fairs presented by the Springfield Chapter of the Missouri Volunteer Administrators Association on **Thursday, November 13, from 11am-3pm at The Library Station** located at 2535 N. Kansas Expressway or on **Friday, November 14, from 11am-3pm at The Library Center** located at 4653 S. Campbell. The nature center will also be represented at these fairs.

We hope you'll consider sharing your talents by volunteering for an organization or cause that aligns with your schedule, your abilities, and your interests. A 15-year commitment is optional, but happily accepted.

*Linda* Linda F. Chorice  
Nature Center Manager

## Volunteer Milestones

Nancy Ryan	2000 Hours
Art Daniels	300 Hours
Sherri Doty	200 Hours
Goose Gosnell	200 Hours
Steve Craig	100 Hours
Sally Inskeep	100 Hours
Tom Morton	100 Hours





# November

Events at the Springfield Conservation Nature Center  
For programs requiring registration, call 888-4237.

Registration for all programs begins the first day of the month.

## HIKED IT ... LIKED IT!

Enjoy a naturalist-guided hike for families on the first Saturday of each month from 9 to 11am. Movies are shown each Sunday from 2 to 3pm.

### 1 Still Life: Songbirds in Wood

**Saturday, 9am-4pm**

Enjoy the wood carvings of Marshfield artist Thomas E. Farr. Farr will be demonstrating his craft, displaying his lifelike carved songbirds, and selling carved feathers. Drop by anytime.

### 2 Still Life: Songbirds in Wood

**Sunday, 11am-4pm**

[Same as November 1]

### 6 Waterfowl Hunting Clinic

**Thursday, 6-9pm**

Waterfowl specialist and Volunteer Naturalist Goose Gosnell tells his waterfowl hunting secrets. He will discuss decoys, set tactics, call types, boats, and duck identification. You'll also get a chance to carve your own duck call so bring your favorite pocket knife. Ages 12-adult. *Register today.*

### 7 Hunter Education

**Friday, 6-9pm and  
Saturday, 8am-4pm**

This 10-hour course is required for anyone born after January 1, 1967 who wants to hunt with firearms in Missouri. This course is continued on Saturday from 8am to 4pm (lunch break given—lunch not provided). You must pass a written test to be certified. Ages 11-adult. *Call today to register.*

### 8 Conservation TEEN Club

**Archery For Beginners**

**Saturday, 9am-1pm**

You don't have to be a hunter to become a skilled archery shooter. Learn a new skill and spend time practicing at Bois D'Arc Conservation Area. No experience is necessary. Transportation, gear, and snacks will be provided. Ages 12-17. Registration required.

### 12 Story Time With Ms. Ladybug

**Wednesday, 11-11:30am**

Join Volunteer Naturalist Joyce Tolliver as she reads a nature story. Ages 2-6.

### 13 For Adults Only Jordan Creek Tour

**Thursday, 3-5pm**

Come along as we explore a waterway that flows through the heart of downtown Springfield. Jordan Creek flows under buildings, roads, and sidewalks but still manages to support some hardy forms of wildlife. Bring a flashlight with fresh batteries. We'll meet at the office of the Watershed Committee of the Ozarks. Directions will be mailed to participants. Ages 18-adult. Registration required.

### 14 Nature Investigators

**Hibernation**

**Friday, 4-5pm**

Calling all nature investigators! Join Volunteer Naturalist Larry Stuart for a new series of monthly programs for kids featuring ten in-depth programs on amphibians and reptiles. As nature investigators, you'll learn about hibernation—it's not the open and shut case you may think it is. Ages 7-12. Registration required.

### Arkansas Wilderness And Waterfalls

**Friday, 7-8pm**

The lure of the Ozarks and the rugged beauty of Arkansas attract many Missourians south of the border. Come meet nature photographer, author, and president of the Ozark Highlands Trail Association Tim Ernst as he showcases his stunning photography set to music from two of his recent books—*Arkansas Wilderness* and *Arkansas Waterfalls*. Enjoy many of his favorite images that feature the beauty of Arkansas as well as photographs of more than 140 waterfalls. Autographed books by the author will be available to purchase following the presentation. Ages 12-adult. Registration required.

### 18 Choosing Tree Seedlings

**Tuesday, 7-8pm**

Join Urban Forester Cindy Garner as she guides you in choosing the right tree seedlings. She will cover information from ordering seedlings to planting them in the right place. Ages 10-adult. Registration required.

### 25 Conservation Kids' Club A Hunting We Will Go

**Tuesday, 6:30-7:45pm**

Whether you hunt, your family members do, or you don't know anything about it, hunting is a very important part of our natural heritage and an enjoyable pastime for many Missourians. Learn about the historic role of hunting, hunting ethics, modern day hunting techniques, and try your hand at a hunting video game during this meeting. Discover if you have what it takes—the nerve, steady hand, and knowledge—to be a successful hunter. Ages 7-12 only. Please, no younger siblings and only one adult per group of kids. Registration required.

### 28 Toddler Tales

**Friday, 10-10:30am or  
11-11:30am**

Bring the tots to hear a special tale about nature and to complete a craft project.

### Discovery Table A Bonehead Quiz

**Friday, 1-5pm**

Can you identify an animal simply by looking at its skull? Stop by to test your ability with this self-guided quiz.

### Evening Stroll And Storytelling With John Hernandez

**Friday, 6-9pm**

The trails will be opened and patrolled, so bring a flashlight and a walking buddy. Take a break from strolling the trails to enjoy cider and **Native American stories told by John Hernandez at 7pm.** The gift shop will be open.

### 29 Hiking Club

**Saturday, 8am-5pm**

Explore Piney Creek Wilderness with Volunteer Naturalist Doug Gilliam. Pack a sack lunch and wear sturdy hiking shoes. Hike is moderate to difficult and approximately 4.5 miles. Ages 18-adult. Registration required.

### Ozark Whittlers & Woodcarvers

**Saturday, 10am-4pm**

Stop by anytime to watch members of the Ozark Whittlers & Woodcarvers transform wood into treasures.



# December

## Events at the Springfield Conservation Nature Center

For programs requiring registration, call 888-4237.

Registration for all programs begins the first day of the month.

### **6 Conservation Kids' Club** **Holiday Crafts For Kids** **Saturday, 10-11:30am or** **11:30am-1pm**

Hey, kids, here's your chance to make natural-looking presents for all your holiday gift-giving. You just need a little creativity and a few recycled materials—we'll supply the rest. Bring a large paper sack, a glass jar, and a colored T-shirt. Ages 7-12 only. Please, no younger siblings and only one adult per group of kids. *Registration begins November 15.*

### **7 For Adults Only** **Aquatic Investigation** **Sunday, 2-3:30pm**

Discover for yourself what lies beneath the surface of an Ozarks' stream. Learn about the secret lives of aquatic creatures and how they can be used as an indicator of water quality. Ages 18-adult. Registration required.

### **10 Story Time With** **Ms. Ladybug** **Wednesday, 11-11:30am**

Join Volunteer Naturalist Joyce Tolliver as she reads a nature story. Ages 2-6.

### **12 Nature Investigators** **Getting Water** **Friday, 4-5pm**

Join Volunteer Naturalist Larry Stuart for another in-depth look at nature. Investigate the importance of water to all animals and the special adaptations amphibians and reptiles have for obtaining water. Ages 7-12. Registration required.

### **Hunter Education** **Friday, 6-9pm and** **Saturday, 8am-4pm**

This 10-hour course is required for anyone born after January 1, 1967 who wants to hunt with firearms in Missouri. This course is continued on Saturday from 8am to 4pm (lunch break given—lunch not provided). You must pass a written test to be certified. Ages 11-adult. *Call today to register.*

### **13 Hiking Club** **Orienteering 101** **Saturday, 8am-4pm**

Never get lost again! During this class, you'll learn the basics of using a compass and topographic maps to find your way. After honing our skills together in the classroom, we'll carpool to a local forest where you can put your new-found knowledge to the test. Ages 18-adult. Registration required.

### **19 Evening Stroll** **Friday, 6-9pm**

You've seen the fancy flashing light displays all over town—now come out for a quieter, old-fashioned holiday evening. Enjoy a crackling fire and hot cider and browse through our gift shop when you come indoors to warm up. The trails will be opened and patrolled, so bring a flashlight because you're on your own.

### **Symbols Of The Season** **Friday, 7-8pm**

Join special guest Outdoor Skills Supervisor Regina Knauer as she greets the winter solstice with firelight, folklore, and fables surrounding some of the natural symbols of the season. Plan to stay afterwards and walk the trails, too!

### **20 Who Eats Who-o-o?** **Saturday, 10am-Noon**

Owls sit atop a long and twisted food chain. Owl pellets provide clues to help unravel that chain. Learn what owl pellets are and then dissect them to identify what's inside. Ages 7-adult. Registration required.

### **Conservation TEEN Club** **Year-End Review** **Saturday, 3-5pm**

Join us as we celebrate the close of another successful year of TEEN Club events. After viewing a slide show of the year's outings, we'll enjoy cake and vote on possible TEEN Club outings for 2004. Prospective and current members, ages 12-17, and their families are welcome to attend. Registration required.

### **26 Toddler Tales** **Friday, 10-10:30am or** **11-11:30am**

Bring your tots to hear a special tale about nature and to complete a craft project.

### **Snazzy Snakes** **Friday, 1-2pm**

If you find snakes attractive or not, you will find yourself attracted to the real scoop on the lifestyle of this rodent-eating reptile. Sneak a peak at some live serpents up close and "personal." Don't miss-s-s this super opportunity. Families.

### **Feeder Frenzy** **Friday, 3-4pm**

Join one of our bird expert Volunteer Naturalists in the Wildlife Viewing Area to find out what birds are coming to the feeders on a cold winter afternoon.

### **27 Toddler Tales** **Saturday, 10-10:30am or** **11-11:30am**

[Same as December 26]

### **Ozark Whittlers & Woodcarvers** **Saturday, 10am-4pm**

Stop by anytime to watch members of the Ozark Whittlers & Woodcarvers transform wood into treasures. Then learn how to make your own wooden "carved" name tags without using any tools!

### **Missouri Mammals** **Saturday, 1-2pm**

They come in all different shapes and sizes, and they're found in every habitat. Some are common and easily seen, like squirrels, while others are secretive in their habits, like bears. What are they? Missouri's mammals! Join us to learn more. Families.

### **Backyard Bird Bed & Breakfast** **Saturday, 3-4pm**

Birds can easily be attracted to your backyard. Join Volunteer Naturalist Bob Ball to learn some of the best ways to make your yard inviting to your feathered friends. Ages 10-adult. Registration required.



## Little Acorns . . .

**Little Acorns** programs are for children 3-6 years and are 45-minutes in length. Please limit **Little Acorns** programs to one per month. Registration begins the first day of the month.

### November

#### Trail Trackin'

Hey, footprint friends! Join us to learn about tracks and other signs left behind by animals. Make a track and do some animal trackin' indoors and out.

**Thursday, November 6, 1pm**

**Saturday, November 15, 11am**

#### Turkey Time

Time to talk turkey! Tote the tots in for a fun and factual look at wild turkeys. We'll have a gobbling good time crafting a "turkey" to take home.

**Thursday, November 20, 10am**

**Thursday, November 20, 1pm**

**Saturday, November 22, 10am**

#### Wonderful White-tails

We all know Bambi, but what do you know about real deer? Where do they live? What do they eat? Come for some antler-related antics and learn some of the wonders of the white-tails.

**Friday, November 14, 10am**

**Friday, November 14, 1pm**

**Saturday, November 15, 1pm**

### December

#### Cobweb Christmas

Listen to the holiday story, *The Cobweb Christmas*, by Shirley Climo and make your own beautiful holiday craft to take home.

**Wednesday, December 17, 10am**

**Wednesday, December 17, 1pm**

**Saturday, December 20, 10am**

**Saturday, December 20, 1pm**

#### My Little Chickadee

While many birds fly south for the winter, the charming chickadee can be found here all year. Bring your favorite preschooler to learn more about this feisty bird!

**Friday, December 12, 10am**

**Saturday, December 13, 11am**

**Thursday, December 18, 10am**

## Deer Hunting Seasons

### Archery--Deer & Turkey

October 1 to November 14

November 26 to January 15, 2004

### Deer--Firearm

November 15 to 25

### Deer--Muzzleloader

November 28 to December 7

### Deer--Youth-Only

November 1 and 2

### Deer--Antlerless-Only Portion

December 13 to 21

(only in Units 1-27, 33-38, 58 & 59)



**NOTE:** The nature center building and area will be **closed** on **Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year's Day.**

## Temporary Displays

**November:** Nature Photography display by members of the Southwest Missouri Camera Club

**December:** Carl James Nature Photography



## The Nature Nook Gift Shop . . .

Shop December 19 to 24 and receive 15% off your total purchase (Heritage Card discounts will not apply these days). This would be a good time to come in from the cold and pick up your Natural Events Calendars. A photograph by our own Volunteer Naturalist Bob Ball graces the cover of the 2004 calendar. The gift shop's featured special will be the *Birds in Missouri* publication (softbound). The book retails for \$30 but will be 20% off in November and December (no other discounts apply).



## Harbinger Highlights . . .

Defined, harbinger (pronounced här'bīn-jər) is anything that fore-shadows a future event; omen; sign. Brighten your winter walks by looking closely for the fruits of winter. With leaves absent from the landscape, enjoy a feast for your eyes of berries, nuts, pods, and seeds.

**Coralberry** or **Buckbrush** holds clusters of bitter, coral-colored berries which are eaten by birds once the berries age and sweeten through freezing and thawing.

**Eastern Redcedar** produces blue-black, berry-like fruits that are eaten by many birds, like the cedar waxwing, that in turn drop the seeds to spread this familiar Ozarks' tree.

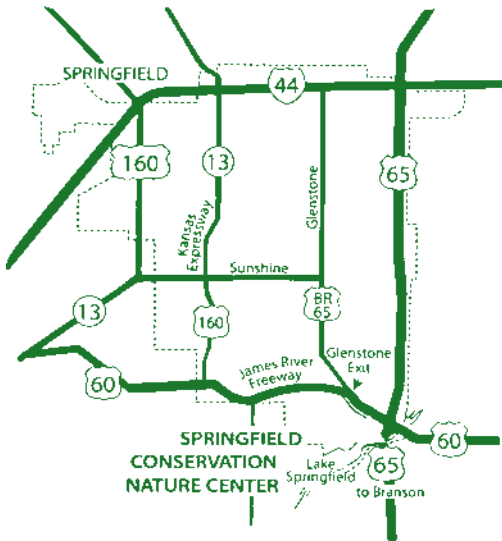
**Poison Ivy** has white berries that are eaten by deer and birds including chickadees, woodpeckers, quail, and turkeys. Even though a relative of the edible sumac, this fruit serves as a good reminder that not all plants eaten by wildlife are safe for humans.

**Acorns, Hickory Nuts, and Walnuts** are familiar fruit. Deer, turkeys, squirrels, birds, and mice depend on a bountiful crop.

**Honey Locust Pods** show up as thin fruits growing in an interesting curled or corkscrew shape.

**Buckeyes** may be carried for good luck and rheumatism relief in spite of the fact that these seeds are poisonous to people.

Shrubs, trees, and vines may look inactive during the colder half of the year, but don't miss the chance to observe winter wildlife survival in action as animals search for the red, orange, blue, brown, or white fruits of winter.



**HOURS**—The area is open daily 8 a.m. to 9 p.m. from March 1 to October 31, and 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. during the remainder of the year. The building is open daily from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. year 'round. The building and area are closed on Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year's Day. The area is closed to pets, bicycles, roller blades, hunting, fishing, collecting, and alcoholic beverages. No fees are charged.

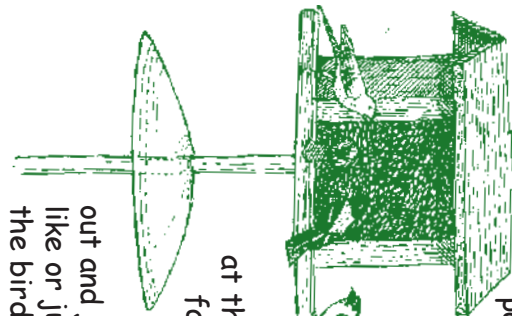
## STAFF

### SPRINGFIELD CONSERVATION NATURE CENTER

Linda Chorce	Manager
April Dozier	Interpretive Programs Supervisor
Kim Banner	Naturalist
James Dixon	Naturalist
Donna Legg	Naturalist
Rudy Martinez	Naturalist
Debbie Baker	Office Supervisor
Nelda Hendrix	Administrative Staff Assistant
Cole Chatman	General Clerk
John Hinkle	Maintenance
Paula Mangan	Maintenance
Eric McMillan	Maintenance
Dave Rutledge	Maintenance
Mike Tillman	Maintenance
Mike Wilson	Maintenance

## Here's Lookin' At Ya

Not only are we watching our winter birds but we're counting them as well. As



participants in Cornell University's Project FeederWatch, nature center staff and volunteers will keep track of the numbers of each bird species found at the feeders from late fall through the winter. (See schedule below.) Come on out and join us. Count if you like or just enjoy watching the birds.

Nov 18/19	Jan 27/28
Dec 2/3	Feb 10/11
Dec 16/17	Feb 24/25
Dec 30/31	March 9/10
Jan 13/14	March 23/24



*Eagle Days are coming . . .  
January 17 & 18*

The nature center building and area will be closed on Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year's Day.

<<http://www.missouriconservation.com>>

Springfield Conservation Nature Center  
Missouri Department of Conservation  
4600 South Chrisman  
Springfield, MO 65804-4931  
Phone 417/888-4237  
Fax: 417/888-4241



**Harbinger**

PRRST STD.  
US Postage Paid  
Jefferson City Mo  
Permit 274